Terry Buchen, CGCS, MG, is president of Golf Agronomy International. He's a 38-year, life member of the GCSAA. He can be reached at terrybuchen@earthlink.net.

**Tow and mow**

The crew at the Round Hill Country Club in Alamo, Calif., creates striped mowing patterns with the 22-inch National I-Stripe, a walk-behind rotary mower with a ribbed rear drive roller, which is similar in size and diameter to a walk-behind greensmower drive roller. A Smithco Mow-N-Go trailer, once used for transporting walk-behind greensmowers, hauls the rotary mower where needed.

A 1/8-inch-thick scrap metal bracket is bolted to the front of the mower deck with two 3/8-inch-diameter bolts, lock washers and nuts. Also, a 3/8-inch-diameter hole is drilled on the end of the metal bracket, which is bent horizontally. A 1/4-inch-thick piece of scrap metal, bent at a 90-degree angle, is welded to the trailer tongue. A chain with a 1/4-inch-diameter lynch pin, which slips through a 3/8-inch-diameter hole drilled into the top, is attached to the other end of the L-shaped bracket. This keeps the mower in place during transport.

The greensmower brackets, which are on both sides of the rotary mower, hold the mower in place and prevent it from sliding sideways. The front tires hang over the front of the trailer and also help hold the mower in place.

Timothy Lindstrom, golf course mechanic, came up with the idea for Dean Cravalho, golf course superintendent, and James Young, assistant superintendent.

The scrap metal was in stock, and it took about 1.5 hours to build.

**Lock 'em in**

Timothy Lindstrom, golf course mechanic at the Round Hill Country Club in Alamo, Calif., purchased a hand truck/dolly with pneumatic tires and fitted it with removable framework to transport three spare Toro Greensmaster 3100 triplex greensmower cutting units around the shop.

The 1/2-square-inch metal tubing framework is welded together to hold each cutting unit horizontally with the reels facing downward. One 1-square-inch-diameter tubing guide, about 2 inches high, was welded onto the top and bottom inside corners of the dolly's framework. A 1/2-inch removable rod slides into place on either side into the 2-square-inch tubing guides, which hold the cutting units in place. The rod is held in position with a 1/8-inch-diameter lynch pin placed on both sides at the top. Radiator clamps - at the top and bottom - attach the portable framework to the dolly.

The dolly was purchased at Costco for about $100, and the square tubing cost about $75. It took about 3.5 hours to build.
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AUCTION

Mojalaki Golf Club in Franklin, N.H.
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96.5 Acre course overlooking Mt. Kearsarge.

Designed by Wayne Stiles, this 3121 yard, par 36, nine-hole course was updated in 2002 plus a five-hole “short course”, driving range, 3000 sf practice putting green & the chipping area were also improved at that time. Improvements: 8000sf clubhouse with 150 seat function hall, kitchen, pro shop, snack bar, locker room and 34’x 52’ workshop/maintenance building. Automated irrigation systems cover the entire facility. Golf carts, maintenance equipment and clubhouse FF&E are included in sale. An adjacent 15 acre parcel is available through easement to the course for course expansion. Terms: $15,000 in certified funds to bid at auction. Deposit increased to equal 10% of accepted bid at execution of sales agreement. Transfer of title no later than October 31st 2008. Buyer Premium 10%. Directions: Exit 19 off Route 93. Follow Park St. to Main St., to Prospect St. (4 miles). Viewings: August 26th & Sept. 6th from 10am until noon.

The property and equipment are unencumbered by mortgages or liens. Seller is free to sell to the highest bidder without consultation or third party review.

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DYING A SLOW DEATH

If you visit Google and search for "slow play" and "golf," you'll find 115,000 results. (Warning: If you search for "slow play" by itself, you'll find a few sites unsuitable for children.)

Research shows the time it takes to play the beautiful game of golf is second only to expense on the list of reasons why people don't participate. In short, speed - or the lack thereof - kills.

The causes are many. It's easiest to blame televised Tour golf. The hacks at home watch and copy notoriously deliberate play - the beautiful game of golf is second only to televised Tour golf. The hacks at home don't participate. In short, speed - or the expense on the list of reasons why people lack thereof - kills.

The causes are many. It's easiest to blame televised Tour golf. The hacks at home watch and copy notoriously deliberate players such as Bernhard Langer and Ben Crane, who take eons to select clubs and line up putts. I've always thought slow professional groups should be haunted by the ghost of Rodney Dangerfield's "Caddyshack" character screaming, "Hey! While we're young!" when they lag. Yet, the Tour hasn't fined a pro for slow play in centuries, so where's the penalty for being a bad example?

Some people blame more difficult designs that include nastier bunkers, environmental areas, fairways as narrow as a '60s necktie, higher rough and the like. I've played a ton of high-end daily fees, many designed by an architect whom I shall not name (hint: rhymes with "Fickless"), and too many are ball-eating monsters for the average schmuck.

By the way, I've come to start calling fast play and - mimicking a facility in Texas - "Top Ten Rules for Rangers" from my superintendent friend Junior down in Naples, Fla.:  
1. Never read yesterday's newspaper while on the job.
2. Never pick up lost balls until they stop rolling.
3. That sign that says, "Do not enter - nature preserve," doesn't apply to you.
4. It's always OK to start people on the back, especially if it's one guy by himself.
5. Employee lunch means get as much food on your plate as possible - even if you don't like it - to get your money's worth.

... ask around and find out if your facility has a reputation for taking forever to play.

6. When you play at the course, the signs and rules don't apply to you. Go ahead and park right on the greens.
7. You'll never make as much money here as you're worth. You're an irreplaceable cog in the cosmic wheel of golf.
8. God didn't intend for you to pick up trash, now did he?
9. Just because they told you, "No golfers start before 7:10 on this side," doesn't mean you have to listen. Send them off as soon as they get there.
10. That shady tree over there was made just for rangering.

Slow play is a curse, but it's also a mixed blessing brought about by the still surprising popularity of golf. The way I see it, incentivizing fast play might be better and easier than penalizing slowness, so think of creative ways you can use a carrot instead of a stick to move that donkey along.

Why not publicize underused, off-peak tee-time blocks and promote a four-hour (or less) round for people who book during those times? Why not print a set of tips for speedy play on the scorecard or a decal on golf cars? Why not offer a free frosty beverage of the player's choice if he finishes by the deadline? Why not adjust green fees to create an incentive for good, fast players to pay a bit more for tee-times that are staggered at 10 minutes instead of six at certain times on peak days?

Why not make a commitment to speedy play and - mimicking a facility in Texas - market yourself as the home of the guaranteed four-hour round. At a time when many courses don't have a special niche in their local market, that's a pretty damn good one.

Do some research, ask around and find out if your facility has a reputation for taking forever to play. Think about how many customers have written you off already because they simply can't afford to be away from work and family that long. Then fix it. If you don't, your facility could die a slow death. GCI
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